DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 129 518 RC 009 479

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TITLE Outward Bound and Higher Education. A Rationale and Outline for College Development.
INSTITUTION Outward Bound, Inc., Greenwich, Conn.
NOTE 14p.; Not available in hard copy due to small print size of original document
AVAILABLE FROM Outward Bound, Inc., 165 West Putnam Avenue, Greenwich, Connecticut 06830 ($0.50)

EDRS PRICE MF-$0.83 Plus Postage. HC Not Available from EDRS.
DESCRIPTORS Course Descriptions; Definitions; Educational Alternatives; *Guides; *Higher Education; *Institutional Role; Learning Processes; *Objectives; *Outdoor Education; Philosophy; Program Descriptions; *Program Development; Self Actualization
IDENTIFIERS Experiential Learning; *Outward Bound

ABSTRACT

Presenting a rationale for experiential learning in higher education and an outline for Outward Bound (OB) program development, this guide includes: (1) personal priorities in an OB program (enhancing self-concept; recognizing individual needs; clarifying values; coping with stress and ambiguity; improving interpersonal relations; finding community and commonality); (2) OB institutional priorities (educational alternatives; experiential opportunities; student responsibility; student commitment/participation; campus orientation; institutional needs); (3) the goals and objectives of an OB program (personal development; interpersonal effectiveness; environmental awareness; experiential learning; values clarification; philosophy; and life styles); (4) OB goal implementation process (skills training; physical challenge; stress experiences; problem solving; self-actualization; reflection; evaluation; and service); (5) OB program types (the traditional 23-day wilderness survival experience; specially designed courses meeting specific group needs; short term courses for special groups; and sequential courses); (6) institutions with OB programs (Colorado College; Prescott; Dartmouth; Wheaton College Vanguard School; Boston University; Evergreen State College; University of North Carolina at Charlotte); (7) development priorities and goals (student growth; curriculum integration; faculty-student relations; leadership; and team-building); (8) development approaches. (JC)

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OUTWARD BOUND AND EXPERIENTIAL LEARNING

As a number of writers in recent journal and magazine articles on education have noted, OUTWARD BOUND is one of those few educational organizations which supports and actually provides an opportunity for experiential learning as the basis for its educational curriculum. What this basically means is that OUTWARD BOUND is committed to using "action oriented" activities to attain behavioral and educational objectives. More particularly, OUTWARD BOUND is concerned with participation and cooperation in decision making and problem solving as students go about the process of learning about themselves and responding to their environment. This process is seen as cutting across both disciplines and techniques in terms of utilizing whatever resources are available within the total environment, whether it be within the school, in an urban setting, or in the wilderness. The student is placed in a situation where he learns through direct experience and where what he learns is immediately tested and, if workable, reinforced through his achievements and successes.

To date, the underlying educational philosophy of OUTWARD BOUND has been identified primarily through the vehicle of an extended wilderness experience where physically demanding and stressful experiences are used to stimulate personal growth, interpersonal effectiveness, and discovery of one's relationship to the environment. It should be emphasized that this experience is merely the medium through which OUTWARD BOUND concepts and approaches to learning are tried, tested, and further refined. Parallel with this program operation have been efforts to extend and modify the initial approach and process into forms applicable to a broader range of learning environments and educational situations. This involvement has led OUTWARD BOUND into cooperative and supportive relationships with public and private secondary schools, colleges and universities, agencies and institutions working with minorities and delinquents, and training programs such as Vista, the Peace Corps, and the Job Corps. Our aim throughout has been to work with these organizations in defining their needs and objectives and to respond with programs and services that reinforce existing commitments or identify new directions for innovation and development.

OUTWARD BOUND AND HIGHER EDUCATION

Since many institutions are already experimenting with programs that share or seek to adopt the goals of an OUTWARD BOUND experience, it seems important to look at how a program with its roots in a wilderness experience and personal survival ethic fits into the purposes and activities of a college or university. Since the involvements range from curriculum integration and training for dormitory counselors to providing a vehicle for modifying campus life and originating unique, experientially-oriented degree programs, some idea of the educational concepts involved seems essential. The following rationale explores this concern in outline form and provides a brief

history of some adaptive programs. The present statement seeks to explore the philosophical basis for utilizing OUTWARD BOUND experiences to enhance learning opportunities for college students.

As an educational idea, OUTWARD BOUND makes certain assumptions about human nature and its potential for increased definition and refinement. One of the most basic of these is that man is a function of his relationships with his surrounding environment, be it human or natural. This is an attempt to see man as a holistic entity, both conditioned by and determining of the world around him. He becomes a product that requires constant redefinition through the relationships which he establishes with himself, with others, and with nature. This is a concept of confrontation and resolution of conflict that finds expression in all aspects of an OUTWARD BOUND course.

On a personal level, the individual is presented with opportunities to confront himself in a number of stress-inducing situations - rockclimbing, peak ascents, wilderness camping and travel - in an unfamiliar and demanding environment with others with whom he is unacquainted and sometimes in conflict. A student is encouraged to develop a method of functioning which enables him to make choices and sacrifices, endure deprivation and discomfort, maintain flexibility and responsiveness, and persist in a natural style and pace which is suitable to his strengths and skills when confronted by difficulties or obstacles which must be overcome.

One of the challenges of the OUTWARD BOUND experience is interacting for an extended period with individuals from radically different backgrounds and life styles. The encounters that take place because of the stress of the environment and the activities designed to explore that environment help make a person aware of how he comes across to others. Through the shared awareness and the interdependence such experiences foster, individuals relax many of their usual restraints and become more open. They tend to become more sensitive and responsive to others' feelings and ideas, and more willing to share tasks, danger and mutual responsibility for the safety of the group or success of a group endeavor.

Finally, the OUTWARD BOUND experience seeks to make the individual more aware of and responsive to his natural environment. By becoming competent in some skills and more self-assured, the student begins to use and interact <u>with</u> nature rather than fighting <u>against</u> nature. He learns to cooperate with and to appreciate nature for the way in which its inherent beauty can enlarge one's sense of self and of human possibilities. Such understanding does much to eliminate fear of the unknown and unpredictable in the world and frees one for perceiving interrelationships which bring together man and nature.

Hence, the value of an OUTWARD BOUND experience for college students lies in providing for increased appreciation of human and physical factors essential for the continuance of human life. This is a notion of survival in the broadest human sense of history and culture. As a contemporary philosopher has noted, today's students have not relinquished their desire for peace, security and good will among men. Rather they are concerned with more immediate and personal questions: what kind of life to lead, what kind of values to hold, what kind of person to be.

Obviously the answer, since our society no longer provides traditional guidelines, must be a highly personal one. But it seems to the ultimate benefit of our society to see that this search is conducted in the least constrained of circumstances with the greatest clarity of purpose and to insure that the answer arrived at has been subjected to the trial of actually being put into practice and examined in all its effects and implications. It is herein that OUTWARD BOUND, in cooperation with the academic community, may be able to provide the circumstances for such trial and examination.

College students seem especially responsive to the combination of physical stress, mental challenge, group encounter, and individual awareness that the OUTWARD BOUND experience is designed to promote. As a group, they are receptive to the exploration and resolution of problems that have to do with living, that define the actual workings of our social order, and which delimit the boundaries for their own personal growth and choice of values. The elements of an OUTWARD BOUND experience - living with the natural environment, striving to reach a particular destination, experiencing solitude - lend themselves to the kind of reflection that encourages discussion and leads to a reasoned and responsible approach to personal problems and social conflicts.

A RATIONALE AND OUTLINE FOR OUTWARD BOUND COLLEGE DEVELOPMENT

A. Personal and Institutional Priorities

1. These personal goals and their potential for realization seem primary for the individual in our work with college students today:

   a. Enhancing Self-Concept. Identifying personal capabilities, strengths and weaknesses, and finding means for self-improvement.

   b. Recognizing Individual Needs. Distinguishing between those needs that can be met by others outside of oneself and those for which one must accept responsibility and take initiative.

   c. Clarifying Personal Values and Directions. Searching for a focal point on which to base personal values and identifying a meaningful and acceptable life style.

   d. Coping with Stress and Ambiguity. Developing a capacity to relate internal stress to external pressures and finding the resources to preserve personal equilibrium amidst outward confusion and disorder.

   e. Improving Interpersonal Relations. Establishing a basis for trust in others and clarifying limits and terms for confrontation and interaction.

   f. Finding Community and Commonality. Discovering common ground with others that provides for sense of family and community where sharing and cooperation can be seen to have concrete benefits.

2. Our involvement with specific institutions suggests that these goals coincide with the following insitutional concerns:

   a. Alternative Approaches to Learning. The desire to find alternative forms of education which meet the differing needs and capabilities of various students.

   b. Experiential Opportunities. Recognition of the need to provide more practical life training to complement the increasing depth and specialization of classroom learning.

   c. Student Responsibility. Encouraging and permitting students to assume some responsibility for their own learning and intellectual values.

   d. Student Commitment and Participation. Providing an antidote for student dissociation from campus and societal problems which require creative brainstorming and cooperative effort to bring to solution.

e. Campus Orientation. Providing students with a sense of their place in the campus community and creating a basis for dialogue between students, faculty and administration.

f. Institutional Needs. Communicating to students the pressures and strictures under which most institutions struggle today and the limits necessary to sustain a viable community.

B. Goals and Objectives of an OUTWARD BOUND Program.

1. The following are generally agreed upon as being the aims or goals toward which OUTWARD BOUND experiences are directed:

a. Personal Development. Extending self-awareness through identifying personal limits, clarifying needs and goals, recognizing place in society and world, and acknowledging responsibility for self and others.

b. Interpersonal Effectiveness. Expanding capacity for responding to others, achieving open and effective communications, and constructing cooperative, sharing and supportive relationships around common projects, involvements or commitments.

c. Environmental Awareness. Enhancing ability to perceive and identify with one's living environment in a holistic manner that generates concern and commitment for its continued development and preservation.

d. Experiential Learning. Creating and maintaining an environment and an attitude where the emphasis is on experimentation and participation in action-oriented forms of learning. Providing training in those skills essential to effective functioning in a wilderness situation.

e. Values Clarification. Providing an experiential setting or focus around which individuals can test and refine personal values in a supportive yet critical framework of peers and others.

f. Philosophy and Life Styles. Stimulating individuals and groups to explore those issues and attitudes which condition their responses and confront the notions proposed by significant thinkers as a means of identifying personal life styles and beliefs.

2. The following are the basic components of the process through which OUTWARD BOUND seeks to implement the above goals:

a. Skills Training. Developing those skills which enable an individual to function with competence and safety in a particular natural environment, i.e. first aid, camp craft and rescue training.

b. Physical Challenge. Enabling an individual to explore his individual physical capabilities and limitations at a pace that is both graduated and adjusted to the needs and abilities of the student; i.e. backpacking, expeditions, marathon.

c. Stress Experiences. Exposing the individual to challenging or "resource mobilizing" experiences which compel him to examine his own reactions and responses in situations new to his experience which require action or decision; i.e. rappeling, rock climbing, emergencies.

d. Problem Solving. Providing opportunities where individuals or groups need to analyze given situations and arrive at solutions that require teamwork, decision making and resolving leadership differences; i.e. initiative activities wilderness travel, emergency evacuation.

e. Self-Actualization. Creating situations in which an individual has the opportunity to strive for and attain goals which reinforce his self-concept and redefine his capabilities; i.e. rock climbing, peak climbs, final expeditions.

f. Reflection. Stimulating individuals to reflect on styles of individual functioning, methods of relating and personal attitudes in ways that stimulate new insight and provide opportunity for constructive retraining; i.e. patrol discussions, solo, debriefing.

g. Evaluation. Sharpening the individual's responses to activities and individuals so as to encourage critical assessment and constructive action in correcting or supporting growth and change; i.e. individual interviews, patrol discussions and debriefing.

h. Service. Developing a sense of responsibility for others and to the environment through work projects or rescue preparedness.

3. The following are different forms in which the OUTWARD BOUND educational process has been implemented:

a. The traditional OUTWARD BOUND course of 23 days in a wilderness setting ranging from sea and desert travel to mountain and winter survival experiences. These courses are composed of heterogeneous groups of students from different social and economic backgrounds and based on the traditional course design which includes:
   1) a period of skill training and orientation.
   2) a series of expeditions to develop and refine these skills and promote group functioning

3) a solo experience where the individual is alone with a minimum of comfort and supports for three days.
4) a final expedition where groups are mixed and the initial experience reinacted with greater independence.
5) a final period of evaluation and termination.

b. Specially designed courses of similar design and duration which are modified to meet the specific needs of groups such as teachers, counselors or minority groups or specific curriculum purposes with a college or school. Courses may be modified to focus on or provide for:
1) Environmental study
2) Cross-cultural experiences
3) Inner city exposure
4) Human relations training
5) Academic subject matter

c. Short term courses for special groups such as public schools, colleges, or agencies where the emphasis is on designing and developing program to meet particular needs such as curriculum design, staff training, team building or crisis intervention.

d. Special arrangements worked out with specific institutions to design a series of experiences or programs which meet the overall objectives of that institution and support structures already in existence. These programs usually have taken the form of providing training and support for freshman orientations, faculty-student retreats, curriculum integration, teambuilding with a student leadership group or responding to particular crisis needs within a given situation. OUTWARD BOUND has provided support and consultation in terms of project planning, funding proposals, program design, staff training, program implementation and evaluation.

C. Institutional Involvement

1. The following institutions of higher learning have sought to utilize the designs or services of OUTWARD BOUND in a variety of distinguishable ways:

a. Colorado College. Primary emphasis on a training program for freshman dormitory counselors which has just completed a three year trial period and is currently being evaluated in terms of its viability and long range implications for college life. The program has consisted of experiences structured around a traditional OUTWARD BOUND course during August with attempts at follow-up during the school year through group meetings and short term field experiences with individual groups of counselors and freshmen. At this moment, every undergraduate student at Colorado College is also offered the opportunity to leave school

to take an OUTWARD BOUND course during the school year with possible financial support from the college or the Colorado OUTWARD BOUND School. A major funding proposal has been developed to continue this involvement and to continue in the development of campus-based programs which will aid the college in furthering its approaches to non-curricular education and creating a viable living community. To date, academic ventures have included an OUTWARD BOUND course to Mexico in January 1970 to study anthropology, provide cross-cultural experiences and language training, and faculty sponsored study for individual students on traditional OUTWARD BOUND courses.

b. Dartmouth College. The basis for OUTWARD BOUND involvement on the Dartmouth campus was the establishment of an OUTWARD BOUND "Centre" with the purpose of seeking an integration of a more holistic form of education involving real life experience. The emphasis was on preparing Dartmouth students - through courses and first hand experience - to function as leaders in working with disadvantaged New Hampshire high school students. The structure was an "OUTWARD BOUND Term" in which students were involved in academic study which included the psychology of stress (Bettelheim), the sociology of group dynamics (Homans), and various other interests in subjects such as meterology, religion and educational theory. A combination of these courses would constitute the student's work for a term as well as independent study projects in topics such as ecology, earth science and urbanology. Dartmouth also developed winter courses for students from other colleges and Dartmouth, ran practica for teachers in the summer, and provided for internships with social or educational agencies or institutions.

c. Prescott College. OUTWARD BOUND involvement at Prescott began in 1967 with the presentation of a joint proposal with the Colorado OUTWARD BOUND School to initiate a three phase program of integrating experiential learning into the academic and social environment of the college. The first phase was the development of a Basic Adventure-Rescue Training program which would serve the dual purpose of introducing new freshmen to the physical environment and educational concepts of Prescott through a Freshman Orientation and providing an alternative to traditional physical education through adventure activities utilizing the environment of the Southwest. OUTWARD BOUND provided the initial program planning and course design and supplied an OUTWARD BOUND permanent director and necessary program staff until Prescott could develop its own. The second phase was an attempt at a synthesis of emotional and physical challenge with academic pursuit of learning through such ideas as a Grand Canyon archaeological or geological expedition, anthropological field trips to Indian reservations, work in sociology with migratory workers in inner-city ghettoes, language study in Mexico, psychology through

group interaction as well as work study programs or service programs with organizations such as VISTA. Phase three was to be the development of "off campus campuses" to provide students with a diversity of opportunities to create self-designed, experientially-oriented degree programs with adequate supervision and direction. This third goal has currently taken the form of an Institute, a new, four-year, degree-granting program based on the "educational portfolio" concept and integrated with the Outdoor Action program to enable students to design their own academic programs while using the resources of both the college and the larger community. Prescott has also established a Challenge/Discovery program which seeks to make Outdoor Action experiences available to students from other institutions.

d. Wheaton College Vanguard School. The OUTWARD BOUND program at Wheaton consists primarily of a pre-college course for freshmen that seeks to prepare students for the intellectual and social demands of life on campus. Started in 1969, the emphasis is on personal development and enhancing the ability to work with others in a Christian setting. Students are put through a variety of physically and emotionally demanding experiences similar to those on a traditional OUTWARD BOUND course and, through group discussions and prescribed readings, led to examine those issues and questions central to moral action in a confused and troubling world. The stated objectives are to influence personal conduct, academic performance, social sense of community. Graduates of the Vanguard experience constitute a cohesive and influential force for change upon their return to campus. Students receive academic credit for taking part in the program.

e. Boston University S.U.R.G.E. A unique and highly individualistic college version of OUTWARD BOUND training given in connection with the Department of Education with graduate credit granted for four week summer courses. During the school year, the program consists of five day courses emphasizing particular wilderness skills such as rockclimbing, kayaking, ski touring with an emphasis on putting these skills to test in highly challenging activity. The aim of the program is to attain self-knowledge through confronting one's reactions and learning to cope with unusual demands while under stress. The personal control and insight learned through such experiences is expected to contribute to an individual's effectiveness in adjusting to the rigors of academic learning.

f. Evergreen State College, Olympia, Washington. The entire emphasis of the curriculum at this new branch of the state university system in Washington is to develop a coordinated

studies program that combines the practical with the theoretical, experience with academic content, and to provide the student with a holistic approach for perceiving and responding to the problems of society and environment. In their first year of operation, five of the ten academic programs experimented with outdoor programs as part of their course design. This year, a special course, called "Wilderness and Consciousness" has been created to enable 26 students to work together designing a curriculum integrating experiences in natural environment with specific intellectual goals and content. The focus for the current year will be on an exploration of ethical systems with an aim to discovering how such systems evolve within societies and what basis they have for being perpetuated. Primary interest will be given to developing a land ethic for the use and development of wilderness areas. Considerable experience in this environment along the lines of OUTWARD BOUND-type experiences will be central.

g. University of North Carolina at Charlotte, Venture Program. This attempt, at one of the newest branches of the state university system, is an attempt to establish an outdoor education program modelled after OUTWARD BOUND which can ultimately be run by staff within the university community. The emphasis, however, would be as much on the outgrowth opportunities that might emerge from the program as on the program itself. Envisioned are opportunities for student internships, research projects in educational or social projects in the community, creating student-run projects to respond to a number of social problems. Creation of these endeavors would be an outgrowth of the experiential learning opportunities and teambuilding efforts derived from the circumstances of the outdoor program. OUTWARD BOUND's role would be to continue to make available the benefit of our continuing experience with experiential learning through our traditional program operation and our work with other institutions engaged in similar programs. We would continue to provide planning, program and training services as needed until the program is self-functioning and self-supporting.

2. Development Priorities and Goals. The following seem to be the critical areas in which OUTWARD BOUND and college institutions have worked and seem able to work together most successfully:

a. Individual Student Growth. Providing the opportunity for individual students to undergo the experience of OUTWARD BOUND courses as a valuable learning opportunity with primary emphasis on personal growth and further possibilities for individual, independent study in areas involving the environment, sociology, psychology and education.

b. Curriculum Integration. Seeking means through which the methodology, the experiential learning opportunities, and open dialogue environment of the OUTWARD BOUND experience can be used, modified or incorporated to fit the particular academic needs or designs of subject areas such as the biological sciences, social sciences, urban studies, education, current affairs, literature and philosophy.

c. Faculty-Student Relations. Providing opportunities for comfortable yet intensive interaction between faculty and students through freshman orientations, special projects based on a learning or service concept, field trips with opportunities for cross-fertilization of ideas, and mixing of disciplines.

d. Leadership Teambuilding. Working with specific student or faculty groups on ways to make them more effective in their particular leadership roles either through teambuilding and conflict resolving activities or through specific planning or group effectiveness training in an OUTWARD BOUND setting. OUTWARD BOUND can provide a context which promotes and supports specific agendas or problem solving.

3. The following steps are suggested as possible approaches for pursuing the development of OUTWARD BOUND programs on college campuses:

a. Identification of need and receptivity to OUTWARD BOUND on a particular campus.

b. Contact with an OUTWARD BOUND School or the national office, OBI, for information on OUTWARD BOUND programs, available resources and the procedures to follow.

c. Visit by OUTWARD BOUND personnel to college campus to meet with individuals or groups interested in or essential to development of such programs.

d. A "needs assessment" of students and institution in terms of the capability of OUTWARD BOUND to provide a service or resource and identification of specific institutional goals to which OUTWARD BOUND may be seen to contribute.

e. Development of a pool of students and staff who have experienced OUTWARD BOUND, through Teachers' Practica and regular courses, and can provide a focal point and potential groundswell for further OUTWARD BOUND interest.

f. Identify target groups among students, campus organizations, academic departments who might be responsive to and in need of OUTWARD BOUND involvement.

g. Decide on a particular group, kind of experience or campus problem which is a priority and research proposals in this area with OUTWARD BOUND personnel.

h. Run a pilot program to test effectiveness of a particular approach to meet desired ends. Evaluate carefully.

i. Develop a detailed proposal for development and explore funding sources, staffing capability, supervisory potential.

j. Develop interest and understanding among trustees, administrative staff and faculty through seminars and river trips. Consider potential for integration into school curriculum or some aspect of campus life. Obtain institutional approval, backing and participant commitment.

k. Plan program: Hire or train staff.

l. Implement program.

m. Evaluate and report on program.

n. Review success and potential for further development based on results. A periodic and schedule reassessment.

4. As part of this process it should be kept in mind that to be effective in an institutional setting OUTWARD BOUND should:

a. Meet some important educational need of the institution.

b. Have a broad or a specific base of informed support on the campus.

c. Be reasonable in cost or of sufficient importance to justify continued funding.

d. Not be seen as or expected to be an answer by itself without widespread involvement and commitment of other campus resources.

5. The following consulting and program services are currently available to colleges through the Colorado OUTWARD BOUND School:

a. Project planning and evaluation.

b. Program design, resources and supervision.

c. Program staffing and implementation.

d. Equipment and logistical planning and support.

e. Training of institutional staff in process and techniques of OUTWARD BOUND.